



Marine Debris Report – April 2006

In this Issue:

House Transportation and Infrastructure to Mark Up Marine Debris Bill

Clean Marinas: Florida Designates 106 “Clean Marinas”

Marine Debris: Texas Sea Grant's March 'Trash Bash' Removes Dangerous Debris

NOAA Sea Grant Agents Coordinate Marine Debris Cleanups

NOAA and the Marine Debris Program participating in Volvo Ocean Race celebrations

Hawaii South Point Cleanups come to a close

Marine Debris in the News

House Transportation and Infrastructure to Mark Up Marine Debris Bill

A bill creating a program to prevent trash from threatening marine environments and navigation safety will be marked up Wednesday, April 5, 2006, by the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee. The bill (S 362) passed the Senate on July 1, 2005, and the House Resources Committee approved the legislation in November.

The measure would create a Marine Debris Prevention and Removal Program implemented by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Coast Guard. The program would be designed to help identify, assess, reduce and prevent marine debris and its adverse impacts on the marine environment and navigation safety, in coordination with non-federal entities. The Senate-passed version of the bill would authorize \$75 million over five years through fiscal 2010, while the House Resources version would authorize \$60 million over the same time period.

According to the House Resources Committee report, the life span of marine debris — which can come from land sources and ocean activities, including trash from ships and offshore drilling facilities — ranges from two weeks (for some paper products) to 450 years (in the case of plastics). The report recognized the potential harm to marine mammals, sea turtles and fish, as they can become entangled in or harmed by ingesting marine debris.

The committee also will vote on resolutions for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

Clean Marinas: Florida Designates 106 “Clean Marinas”

Florida Sea Grant and partners are working to enlist even more of the state’s 2,000 marinas in the Clean Marina Program, which seeks to improve the health and cleanliness of Florida’s waterways through voluntary implementation of environmental best management practices among Florida marinas.

With more than 100 additional marinas in the pipeline, and over 20 Designated Clean Boatyards, the program is making an impact. Through this partnership approach, opportunities have been developed for public and private entities to work together, as well as, provide incentives and remove institutional roadblocks to wise resource stewardship of Florida’s waterways.

Marine Debris: Texas Sea Grant's March 'Trash Bash' Removes Dangerous Debris

While collecting unsightly and dangerous debris along the shorelines of local waterways in Houston and Galveston, volunteers also collected used fishing line to deposit in special recycling bins. Monofilament line, used by most anglers, is a strong, flexible plastic line that is manufactured as a single strand. Birds and other animals become entangled in it and may drown or lose a limb, or swallow it and starve to death. The line also can wrap around boat propellers, causing damage by blocking water intakes and creating excessive wear on lower units. Recycling bins for monofilament line will also be available at many local boat ramps, fishing piers, parks, tackle shops and marinas during the rest of the year - a list is available at <http://mrrp.tamu.edu>

NOAA Sea Grant Agents Coordinate Marine Debris Cleanups

Bob Wasno, Sea Grant Extension agent for Lee County, FL coordinated the 5th annual Boca Grande Pass Underwater Marine Debris Clean-up. The Boca Grande Pass is one of the top recreational fishing areas in the world. Over 30 organizations and 100 individuals participate in these efforts. To date, over 25,000 pounds of marine debris has been recovered from these fishing grounds. As a result of these activities, the State of Florida has also revised their fishing regulations that have reduced marine and fishing debris from entering these waters.

Betty Staugler, Sea Grant Extension Agent for Charlotte County coordinated the inaugural Peace River Derelict Crab Trap Cleanup event with the Manatee Entanglement Working Group. This cooperative effort of state agencies, environmental non-profit groups and environmental consulting group pulled 161 derelict crab traps from the bottom of the Peace River, and released a number of fish and crabs that had been trapped in these abandoned traps.

NOAA and the Marine Debris Program participating in Volvo Ocean Race celebrations

The NOAA MDP is working in conjunction with the Office of Response and Restoration, as well as other NOAA offices, on an exhibit presentation to be displayed at the Baltimore Waterfront Festival April 27- May 3rd and at the Maryland Heritage Festival in Annapolis May 4-7th, 2006. Both events are in celebration of the Volvo Ocean Race, a boat race that began last November 2005 and ends in June 2006. The race started in Vigo, Spain, and the teams who have traveled around the world will be stopping in Maryland for a breather, to then go on and finish in

Goteborg, Sweden.

NOAA will be present at both celebrations with a large exhibit and tours of the NOAA *Bay Hydrographer*, a hydrographic survey vessel. For more information on the events and the race itself, visit <http://www.oceanracechesapeake.org/info.html>.

Hawaii South Point Cleanups come to a close

SOUTH POINT CLEANUP — Hawaii Wildlife Fund conducted its last scheduled cleanup for the Waiohinu-Ka Lae coast marine debris removal project on Saturday, April 22nd. This project is funded by the NOAA Marine Debris Program and sponsored by the Hawaiian Islands Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary. Results are pending.

Marine Debris in the News

NOAA Interview on NPR

To listen to the audio clip from NPR covering the Trash Free Potomac Initiative, which features NOS AA Jack Dunnigan as well as many others, visit <http://archives.wamu.org/mp3/mc/06/03/m1060324.mp3>.

This weekly report is distributed by NOAA's Office of Response & Restoration, Marine Debris Program.